1776
MINISTRY & ELDERS
QUERIES & ANSWERS
CONCERNING THE
FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

PAPERS
OF
SHAKERS

88

NEW YORK
New Lebanon

J. 1. Can you tell me the names of those Blessed first founders that came from England and preached the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in America.

A. Yea, Blessed Mother Ann Lee, was the first Anointed of God to open the door of full and free salvation to a lost world; and to usher in the second appearing of Christ and stand in her lot as the holy Mother of the new creation in full union with her Lord and Savior.

And Elder William Lee and Elder James Whittaker was called to stand as helpers and supporters to her in her Ministry.

These are the names of those that crossed the wide Ocean and braved many dangers for our sakes; these are the ones; that first sounded the holy trumpet in this land, these are the ones that God in his holy Wisdom and loving kindness did send forth in the image and likeness of his beloved Son.

Q. 2. And do you not believe it to be your duty to offer up praise and thanksgiving to God that your soul is made partaker of this blessed gos=pel in which is found Eternal life.

A. Yea, I believe it is my daily duty to offer up my most grateful thanks to God, for calling me in my childhood from a vain and wicked world, and placing me among his chosen people where I am daily taught & instructed in the way of all purity.

Q. 3. And do you not believe it to be your duty to pray earnestly to God, to guard and keep you in his holy way.

A. Yea, I believe it is my duty to pray earn=estly to God for help and strength to overcome an evil nature and for a willing heart to strictly obey the good counsel and instruction which I do daily receive.

Q. 4. And do you not believe that you ought to guard yourself strictly against gazing upon

the vain enchanting things of time.

A. Yea, I believe it is my duty to watch strictly over myself that my youthful mind may not be caught in the allureing snares of vanity.

Q. 5. And do you not believe it is your duty to keep yourself separate from the children of this world.

A. Yea I believe I ought to be strictly obedient to those that are older and wiser than I am, they teach me to keep clear from the children of this world and from the spirit they possess.

Q. And do you understand for what reasons you are required to keep this separation in body and spirit.

A. Yea it is because the children of this world delight in following the inclinations of the carnal mind which is enmity against God and wholly opposed to the cross of Christ; which

cross Mother Ann and the Elders plainly declared must be faithfully supported by every true believer, and this is just what the Lord Jesus Christ taught his followers when he was here on the earth, you must deny yourself of the world take up your cross and follow me or you cannot be my disciples, so I do plainly understand that the followers of Christ must keep themselves separate from sin and sinners and live a pure holy and just life unspotted from the world.

Q. Did you ever see Mother Ann or any of those blessed first witnesses that came from England.

A. Nay I never saw the face of Mother Ann nor of any of those blessed first witnesses that came from England, but I have read much concerning them and it is equal to me with that of the new Testament, and I have also heard much good spoken of Mother by her faithful children those that were conversent

with her while here in the body, and who after her decease succeeded her in her Ministry.

Q. And did you receive this belief and understanding from Mother Anns succeeding Ministers

A. Yea I received this belief & understanding from Mother Anns succeeding Ministers those that received the holy Anointing through her, and have been faithful to follow her footsteps in the path of true holiness.

Q. And have you ever been instructed concerning Mother Anns first landing in America and of her setting herself in this country.

A. Yea I have understood by those that were well acquainted with Mother Ann and the Elders with her that she landed on this American Shore in New-york August 6. 1774. accompanied by Elder William Lee Elder James Whittaker and several others of her followers, and not having means to settle them-

selves immediately they each one sought labor for their own support as they could get opportunity thus they were scattered in body yet they often gathered together and joined in the solemn worship of God secluded from the Children of this world; thus they continued in fervent cries and prayers to God for his protection, amidst strangers and in a strange land and uniting themselves in body and spirit as often as their scattered situation would admit waiting with patience for God to open the way for them to go forth in the Ministry that he had appointed unto them and this was all the privilege that Mother Ann and those that crossed the Ocean with her had for more than two years; In which time the brethren were busily employed in preparing suitable conveniences for the settling of Mother Ann and her little family, they purchased a lot of new land in the town of Watervliet about 7 miles north west of the City of

Albany and erected small buildings on it thus in the year 1776. in the month of September they gathered together and took up their residence in their own humble mansion.

Q. And is this the period of time from which is stated that Christ commenced his second appearing to the people of America through our ever blessed Mother Ann Lee.

A. Nay this is not the period of time from which we state that Christ revealed himself to the people of America through this our Ever blessed Mother Ann Lee, altho the Lord Jesus had taken up his abode in her and made known his mind and will unto her, and declared unto her that she was chosen and appointed of God to make known his everlasting gospel to this American people, yet she did not feel that her time had fully come to go forth and declare this revealed truth openly to the people until in the year of 1780. it being nearly four years

from the time Mother Ann and those with her settled themselves in this obscure place in the wilderness before she made known her mission to the people.

Q. And did they live unmolested by those that did not unite with them previous to Mothers openly declaring the words of eternal truth to the people.

A. Yea as far as any one had knowledge of them previous to Mothers openly declaring the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, they lived in perfect quietness, there was no harm spoken of them, no evil devised against them, until the Eternal trump of God was sounded and the alarm pointedly given against the unfruitful works of darkness.

Q. And can you relate the exact time that Mother Ann began to feel her time coming to go forth in her Ministry and the commencement of it and the operation this new revelation

had upon the minds and feeling of the people.

Q. You Pleam relate the exact time that Mother began to feel the spirit pressing upon her soul to prepare the minds and feeling of her companions to make preparation for the opening of the gospel in this land, it was in the spring and summer of 1779. that Mother began to labor with her whole heart and soul to rouse and encourage her little band to be faithful and zealous in things spiritual and temporal telling them that the time was nigh even at the door that many people would flock there to hear the words of Eternal truth, and as Gods Ministers they must stand prepared free and willing to declare his word boldly unto them. Accordingly the year following in the month of March it happened that some one from New Lebanon came to the knowledge of Mother Ann and those with her (at their own residence,) and after having some conversation with Mother & the Elders

and beholding their Christ like deportment they were convinced that in them dwelt the Eternal word of God. The report of which rapidly spread abroad and the minds and feelings of the people began to be much excited in regard to what they had heard concerning Mother and her pious band, many were in haste to visit them and examine this new doctrine for themselves and when they had found them, they were constrained to declare that the Savior was born unto them and they freely acknowledged that never woman taught as Mother taught and that she was clothed with the Eternal power of God and in her dwelt the true spirit of Christ the Savior. Now they bowed themselves before God for his great condescension in revealing the way of Eternal life unto them. And humbly submited themselves to the testimony that Mother & the Elders opened unto them, for they well knew that Christ had come the second time for with a

single eye they have watched his coming so with impartiality they could compare his first and second coming.

And this is the time that we freely declare unto all men that Christ commenced his second appearing without sin unto salvation in and through this chosen Female. "Whom we (in grateful acknowledgment before God and in due respect to the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Author and finisher of our Salvation and in love and gratitude to her who has suffered pain & distress for our sakes,) call our blessed Mother, and we feel confidence and blessing in so doing.

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Mother Lucy's Sayings.

Spoken at different times and under various circumstances.

Young people must not expect to please themselves with every fancy, or think to have every notion that they would naturally want, or to have their own ways; but they must remember that they are called to be examples in all things.

Brethren and sisters, you hear a great deal about the cross, the daily cross, perhaps a great deal more than you want to hear; many times; but every one ought to consider that all they have gained towards the kingdom of heaven, is by the daily cross, and all who do not carry this daily cross, in all their thoughts words and actions, cannot travel in the way of God.

Some think they have harder times, and their crosses are greater than others, but such ought to consider whether there is not something in <u>them</u>, which needs greater crosses to subdue; and then dont you flounce, & frown, until you see whether you do not need all you have, and more!

Brethren and sisters, I feel that many times, you would trample upon the Laws of Zion, and would go one side of order to satisfy some inclination in yourselves; Such as ye call little orders you pass by, and you will say by and by, when Mother and the Elders are gone; "Why! we did so when Mother was here, why cant we do so now? If they allowed such things, who can blame us?" But I want you to remember, such things are not allowed; we do not allow of disorder.

Mother said (when speaking to her children on Christmas,) if there are any difficulties, hard feelings, or any thing so great that it cannot be settled to day, it ought to be done tomorrow; and if you cannot get hold of a forgiving spirit, do sell all that you have and buy it, you have enough to part with if you will.

I desire there may be none male nor female, but labor to be peace makers;- I can sense very clearly the reward of the peace maker; you had better sacrifice a great deal, than not to keep peace, brethren and sisters. You must not take offence nor give offence; and if any one will give an offence, they will take an offence. If you break the precious Laws of Christ you get off the christian ground.

This I call sacrifice, to give up and to hate our nasty natures; natural disposition, and ugly appetites, with which we were all born into the world; and who is there that will flinch, or give back because the way is so straight? I hope there is none.

I do not glory in my profession, I would as willingly be a jew, as a Shaker, unless I live a good life; I might as well be a jew, as to profess to be a follow of Christ and not be one.

I do not know but that I have a different understanding of the Gospel, and about the way of God, from what some of you have; I thought when I first heard the Gospel, that I must give up every kind of evil; - I thought old ugly was going to be rejected; - I expected to give up pride,

covetousness, deceit, lying and every bad thing, if ever I went to heaven; and if you think you can give away to backbiting, anger, crabbed, crooked ways, and whatever an evil nature may led you to, and think you are a going to heaven, I want no such heaven.

If there are any who have a disposition too good, too nice, and too pretty to be destroyed, they ought to let it be known, that we need not expect so much from them; but my natural make is none to good to die, I do not wish to save it. I hate my old natural disposition, and I find next of the crop.

You ought to have love and union to each other, a godly union which is very different from a fleshly union.

I desire that you would speak to each other in the new tongue, and not let the old tongue bear any rule. Just as much as you give away to the old tongue, to chafe and gall each other, just so much you are defiled.

Those who have the spirit of Christ, are meek and submissive, and humble. It makes them simple, like children willing to do any thing to find favor with God.

I want you to consider how mean and poor you are without the gift of God; this does not lift you up and make you proud, and disdain submission, neither will it make you feel cast down ~~& &~~ or despised, but by it you will feel confidence and peace. But this great big sense, makes one feel hateful; it makes one look contemptible; I can almost always tell a person who feels big, wherever I can see such an one.

I can love and bless all; I feel that the brethren and sisters are my interest; and that I am their's; I feel that I cannot do without them, nor they without me. I desire that none would excuse themselves that they cannot bless, because there is something in the way; there is always room enough to bless.

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I feel more concerned about the union, than almost any thing else; I desire you all to watch yourselves in this point; it is a matter that you can all understand. There are none of you so strong, that you can divide and separate out; you cannot go to heaven alone; but you can be lost alone.

I believe disunion will be the over-throw of many souls yet; but if any souls are lost, they will have to come down and acknowledge their own folly & guilt.

If any feel as if they could not have their natures spoiled, they ought to step back, and not unite with the rest in worship.

There is a daily duty to do, that is for the brethren to be kind to the brethren, sisters kind to the sisters, and brethren & and sisters kind to each other. You ought to be very careful how you speak to each other; speak lovingly one to another according to the simplicity of the Gospel.

Mother Lucy when speaking to a company of young brethren and sisters, - said I was taught when I was a young believer, that I had better eat my fingers off, than to speak or feel against those who are before me in travel in the way of God. And it is really so, and you must not do it.

And again, said Mother, you must all labor to keep your order, for it is your protection. The orders of God seem hard to a carnal mind; but I should say, there are not many, if any, here present so young, but they may feel and see the necessity of keeping good order.

To my sense Believers are held together, in union by a golden chain; this chain is composed of the gifts and orders of God, and every order is a link in this chain; and if you break any of these orders you break this chain, and are exposed to be led astray. But while you are careful to keep the gifts and Orders of God, you are surrounded with this Golden chain, and are secured from all evil.

This last sentance was spoken by Mother, about sixteen days only before her decease.